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ABSTRACT

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A programme to reduce burnout among hospital nurses in Gaza-Palestine

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Background: This thesis concerns an investigation into burnout among hospital nurses in the Gaza Strip-Palestine. The purpose of this study was to explore the prevalence and nature of burnout in a population of nurses in Gaza-Palestine and then to develop a strategy for reducing burnout and test its effectiveness. From this purpose a number of research objectives were set and from those objectives, a number of research questions were established.

Method: A quantitative survey design was employed as the method for data collection, with a self-administered questionnaire pack being the data collection technique. Data were collected on burnout using Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI). Demographic data were also collected. Data were analysed using a variety of descriptive and inferential statistical methods using the SPSS system version 17. In particular, parametric and non-parametric tests of comparison were employed. The burnout assessment was stratified into three levels (high, moderate, and low). Thirty participants of each level of burnout (15 interventions, and 15 controls) were randomly chosen on the base of 1:1 assignation, provided that they agreed to participate in part two of study. The control groups were assured that they would receive the same burnout reduction programme if found to be effective. The intervention programme consisted of 9 sessions and was provided for each intervention group separately. After completing the programme, the same questionnaire (MBI) was applied for intervention and control groups to check the effectiveness of the programme.

Sample: The study population in this study is the entire cohort of nurses who are working in 16 hospitals in Gaza (n=1801). Only 1500 nurses were asked to complete a questionnaire pack, and 1330 packs were returned and used in analysis with response rate=88.7%.

Results: The results of this study revealed a high prevalence of burnout (EE=44.9%, DP=53.6%, Low PA=58.4%). Emotional exhaustion (EE) was significantly associated with gender, hospital type, night shifts, and specialisation. Depersonalisation (DP) was significantly associated with hospital type extra time, night shifts, experience and specialisation. Low personal accomplishment (LPA) was significantly associated with hospital type, night shifts, and experience.

The burnout reduction programme was effective with moderate and severe burnout but not with low levels of burnout.

Conclusion: Being a nurse in Gaza hospitals appears to be a stressful experience. Continuation of this burnout reduction programme or a similar process is recommended to reduce burnout among Palestinian nurses in Gaza.